

Czech Republic

Central European Studies, Charles University;

Hungary

Grand Budapest: Business, Culture, and History, Corvinus University

UCEAP Advising Notes

Objective of the Advising Notes Document

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad (BSA) adviser to review program specific details that may impact a student's *decision to apply* for a UCEAP program. The document is *not* a summary of eligibility requirements, academic, housing, application and other logistical details freely available to students on the UCEAP and BSA websites, and reviewed by a student in the Program Self-Assessment.

Note about UCEAP's Programs in the Czech Republic and Hungary:

These UCEAP programs are affiliated with the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE). Students must complete at least one semester at UC Berkeley before departure.

The best sources of detailed information for this program are the UCEAP webpages

http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/czech_republic/Pages/central_european_studies_prague.aspx

<http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/Hungary/Pages/Grand-Budapest.aspx>

and the CIEE Program webpages

<http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/czech-republic/prague/central-european-studies/>

<https://www.ciee.org/go-abroad/college-study-abroad/programs/hungary/budapest/business-european-studies> from which you can access a substantial list of the interesting and varied courses offered by CIEE and the host universities. Scroll to the bottom of the CIEE webpage for the course listings, descriptions, and a link to the syllabi.

If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP or CIEE websites or the Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA Czech Republic and Hungary adviser in 160 Stephens Hall.

Advisor Contact Information

For BSA Adviser name, email and drop-in advising hours, visit <http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/advising>

Study Czech or Hungarian at Cal before your semester in Prague or Budapest

Berkeley offers two years of Czech language instruction, with a strong emphasis on Czech culture. For information on Introductory Czech (Czech 26A & B) and Advanced Czech (Czech 116A & B), please contact Ellen Langer, PhD, Lecturer in Czech Language and Culture, at erlanger@berkeley.edu. You would get so much more out of your semester in Prague if you knew even a semester's worth of the language upon arrival! Likewise, if you could study even one semester of Hungarian before going to Budapest:

<http://slavic.berkeley.edu/courses-2/2433-2/hungarian-1a-introductory-hungarian/>

Financial Aid and Scholarships for Study Abroad

View UCB financial aid details and many scholarship opportunities on our webpage:

<http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances>

Deadlines to apply for scholarships are earlier than you may think, so do your research now!

Some scholarships that are good for students going to the Czech Republic or Hungary are:

- **Boren Scholarships** exist for the Czech Republic and Hungary (among many other countries): Boren Scholarships offer generous financial assistance to US undergraduates who are US citizens in exchange for a substantial service commitment with the federal government upon completion. http://www.borenawards.org/boren_scholarship/basics.html
- **Gilman Scholarship** (must receive Pell Grants.): <http://www.iie.org/en/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>
- UC Berkeley's **Institute of International Studies Merit Scholarships** - non-need-based scholarships of up to \$2000 each to support undergraduate research (can be done abroad) in any area of international studies (deadline is in November) - <http://iis.berkeley.edu/content/undergraduate-merit-scholarships>
- Duttonhaver Scholarships for UCEAP year-long programs - http://eap.ucop.edu/Scholarships/Pages/Duttonhaver_DanWise.aspx
- CIEE, UCEAP's partner in the Czech Republic and Hungary, offers scholarships based on merit and financial need. An application for **CIEE scholarships** is available at <http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/scholarships-grants/>. The CIEE scholarships application must be sent directly to CIEE and is a separate document from the CIEE Study Center Program Application.

Please note: Most financial aid, including federal, state, UC, and Berkeley scholarships and grants, cannot be used by students studying on independent (non-UC) programs. Students who receive scholarships or grants from outside organizations should contact those organizations to confirm that the awards may still be used for non-UC programs abroad.

Internships Available

See http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/czech_republic/Pages/central_european_studies_prague.aspx?t=5 and <http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/Hungary/Pages/Grand-Budapest.aspx?t=5> for information about internship opportunities in Prague and Budapest. Students can do an internship for academic credit (P/NP) in lieu of one of their program courses. Prior to departure, CIEE will contact students and ask those interested to complete an Internship Proposal Form.

Brief Comparison

Minimum GPA required for Prague is 2.5; for Budapest 2.75. All courses are taught in English. Language courses are optional.

While both programs offer an “area studies” menu of courses about the city, country, and region taught by CIEE professors, Prague also provides the opportunity to take courses at Charles University or the famous Film Academy (FAMU) with other international students, whereas in Budapest, students have the opportunity to take Business, Management, Economics, and Political Science courses alongside international and Hungarian students at Corvinus University. The number and variety of CIEE courses offered in Prague is greater than in Budapest due to the difference in number of participants, but Corvinus University's courses in the fields mentioned above augment CIEE's menu.

Prague is more well-known which probably accounts for the larger number of students – over 200 total per semester; Budapest is a more “off the beaten path” hidden gem attracting ~35-40 total participants per semester so can offer more opportunities for integration and getting out of the “American bubble”, as well as a more personalized and supportive experience for students. Housing in Budapest is in a new hostel in a very nice neighborhood along the Danube River and a five-minute walk to Corvinus University.

Both cities offer beautiful architecture and fascinating histories.

UCEAP Advising Notes – Czech Republic and Hungary

Competitiveness of the Program

Students who meet the minimum eligibility requirements and submit a well-prepared application with an articulate Statement of Purpose will have a good chance of being selected, but we cannot make guarantees in advance.

Selection Interviews

If you need to be interviewed, you will be notified by the BSA adviser in 160 Stephens Hall after your application has been reviewed.

Passport, Visa Application, and International Travel Prior To the Program

Your passport must be valid for *6 months beyond the end date of the UCEAP program in the Czech Republic or Hungary*. Check the UCEAP Czech Republic and Hungary webpages to see the tentative end dates. If you don't have a valid passport, apply right away so that you have it in your possession by March 1 for Fall or Year, or by September 1 for Spring.

Also, your UCEAP application name and your passport name must be identical (not similar!) If there is a discrepancy of even one letter, hyphen, etc, the Czech or Hungarian consulate will not issue you a visa. Please check your passport name and use precisely that name on your MyEAP on-line application, even if it doesn't match the name you use at UC Berkeley. If your passport name has an error, either get your passport fixed before you apply for EAP, or simply use the incorrect name on your MyEAP application in order to avoid a crisis later on.

FYI – international travel just prior to the program: The student visa application process for the Czech Republic and Hungary is quite bureaucratic and time-consuming. Therefore, do not make any international travel plans for the months before the program starts until you receive all the details about arrival and visa application requirements that will arrive from UCEAP and CIEE via e-mail a few months prior to departure. It is possible that you will have to relinquish your actual passport for 60 days or longer while the consulate processes your student visa. That means you can't leave the country during that period. It may be possible to apply for a duplicate US passport, so if you must travel outside of the US during the few months prior to the official start date of the program, you should contact the National Passport Agency immediately to find out how long it will take to get a second passport and how to apply for it. If you foresee any problems in this area, please consult with the BSA Czech Republic and Hungary adviser in 160 Stephens Hall as soon as possible.

Likewise, if you are thinking of participating in back-to-back options, it would be wise not to choose the Czech Republic or Hungary as your second program abroad due to the visa application process; better to go to the Czech Republic or Hungary first, and then to a country with an easier visa application process second. Please remember: applications for back-to-back applications must be approved by both BSA advisers in 160 Stephens Hall BEFORE you start them!

Additional Application Materials for CIEE

After selection to the program, students must complete CIEE and host university application materials which will take additional time to prepare, including, but not limited to, letters of recommendation, official transcript, and passport-size photos. Please do not take action until you have been given detailed instructions for these items by UCEAP and CIEE.

Graduating Seniors Spending their last UC Semester Abroad in any UCEAP Program

Graduating seniors must enroll in a full course load while abroad, even if they do not need the courses or units for graduation. (Requests by DSP students who provide documentation may be considered for a reduced course load.) Only one-third of units taken abroad may be on a P/NP basis (so about one course); the rest must be letter-graded.

Housing policy in Prague

Please note that CIEE does not place two students from the same university in the same housing placement, so if you choose to study in Prague with friends from Cal, you will not be allowed to live together.

LGBTQI Students:

Please read the UCEAP webpage on Sexual and Gender Diversity, including the description of the situation in the Czech Republic under the “Host Country Laws and Cultural Norms” section, as well as the resources at the bottom of the webpage: <http://eap.ucop.edu/Diversity/Pages/LGBTQ.aspx> If you have any concerns, please feel free to discuss them with the BSA adviser in 160 Stephens Hall. Hungary will be added soon.

DSP Students

If you receive accommodations at Cal and would like to know if they are also available in the program abroad that interests you, it is a good idea to email your BSA adviser in 160 Stephens Hall to inquire about your specific needs. That way, if your needs cannot be accommodated in that program, you can investigate other programs that might.

Medical Marijuana

Marijuana is not legal in the Czech Republic or Hungary, even if you are approved for medical marijuana use in California. Please consult with your primary care physician for a legal substitute before applying to the program.

EAP Alumni/ae

EAP alums are some of your best resources for information about the program. If you would like to be put in touch with alums, simply send the Czech Republic BSA Adviser an email addressed to the alums (e.g., “Dear alums, I have some questions about the program...”) and the message will be forwarded to them. Limit your questions to the top 2 or 3 initially in order to get responses. The CIEE program in Hungary is new to the UCEAP menu as of 2019-20, so there are no UC Berkeley alums back from Budapest yet.

Articles about Prague to pique your interest:

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/czech-republic/prague/travel-tips-and-articles> - Lonely Planet

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/18/travel/my-hidden-prague.html?src=me&ref=general&_r=0 - Hidden Prague

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/10/26/travel/what-to-do-36-hours-in-prague-czech-republic.html> - 36 hours in Prague

Articles about Budapest to pique your interest:

<https://www.ricksteves.com/watch-read-listen/read/articles/budapest-city-of-paradox> - a very brief introduction

<https://welovebudapest.com/en/2017/06/28/19-global-articles-praising-budapest-in-the-first-half-of-2017/> - 19 articles in global publications from 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/29/travel/36-hours-in-budapest.html> - 36 hours in Budapest